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and state the case, and beseech his help to capture the offender. When he is caught, theatricals are given in his honor, or a large tablet presented to the temple."

"Mr. Hwang, of Ta-Shin hsien, was an overseer of the scholars of a certain district. He and his wife were very virtuous and delighted in doing good works. During his term of office he had cut several sets of blocks of good books, and printed several thousand copies and distributed them gratuitously. Mrs. Hwang had the blocks of the *Yü-li* cut; she had a large number printed and gave them away. She also bought and set at liberty several thousands of birds and fishes. They had five sons, and all of them, during the reign of the Emperor K'ang Shi (A. D. 1662-1723), attained high honors as civil and military mandarins."

In regard to this latter extract Mr. Clarke observes that the scholars of every city are under the charge of an overseer, by which means concentrated opposition can be brought against Christian missionary effort. "In many parts of China the virtuous people have what is called a Fang Sen Hwie, *i. e.* a 'Society for Liberating Life.' It is believed that animals, birds, fishes, and insects are possessed by some one's spirit; if their death is prevented, the spirit obtains some mitigation of the pains of hell; therefore much merit is obtained by setting at liberty living creatures. A meeting of the members is convened every year. If near the water, as at Ta-li fu, they have a picnic on the water, and fishermen do a good trade by selling live fish cheaply, and their purchasers throw them into the lake. Sometimes sparrows are bought, but I have never heard of an ox or horse being bought for this purpose. First, it would be too dear, and, secondly, it would soon be recaptured. It can be seen that the Chinese believe that distribution of relief during a time of famine is reckoned a meritorious act."

EXTRACTS FROM THE YÜ-LI OR PRECIOUS RECORDS (continued from No. xliii.):—

Reward for Preventing Suicide. (No. 6.)—"Mr. Tai Shung, M. A., of Fuh Liang, lived in a room near a stream. One night he heard a spirit say near his window, 'To-morrow a woman is coming to drown herself, and I shall thereby secure a substitute.' Tai kept watch, and saw a woman come to the stream. She was weeping bitterly, and her hair was hanging about her shoulders. He asked her: 'What is the cause of your sorrow?' She replied: 'I am in great trouble. My husband is a notable gambler and a drunkard, our house is bare, and he proposes to sell me to a life of shame. I am well connected, and rather than disgrace my family I will drown myself.' He dissuaded her from her purpose and invited her into his house. Within a short time her husband arrived, and upon seeing her used very abusive language. Tai reasoned with him, and said: "If you are really so very poor, do not sell your wife, I will lend you some money.' The husband and wife burst into tears, accepted the offer, and returned to their home. The same night Mr. Tai heard some strange sounds. A voice said: 'Curses be upon you for spoiling my chance;' whilst another

said: 'Why do you desire his injury? Shang Ti has decreed that he shall be a Grand Secretary, and you cannot injure him.'"

Edict of the President of the Sixth Hall of Judgment in Hades (p. 345).

— "Those who grumble at heaven and earth, wind, thunder, cold, heat, rain, or clear heavens, who cry or commit nuisance toward the north; persons who destroy idols and steal their souls and intestines or scrape the gold leaf off the idols, or who use the names of the gods frivolously; who-soever destroys characters or books, who shoots rubbish near a temple, or worships an idol in a dirty kitchen; persons who treasure up obscene books, but gladly destroy good books and tracts; those who engrave or paint on any kind of crockery or furniture the sign of the dual principles of nature, or the Pa-kwa, the eight signs, or sun, moon, stars, gods, the eight genii, or the constellation of mother Wang, or embroider the sacred sign of Buddha upon clothes; persons who write the name of the owner of furniture upon the seats of chairs or the tops of stools, thus defiling the character by sitting upon it (it is proper to write or paste the owner's name underneath); people who wear clothes with a dragon upon them; who trample upon grain and spoil it, or hoard up grain until high prices may be had, — whoever is guilty of the above crimes shall pass a preliminary examination at this hall, and then be passed to their proper hell for punishment; when their time is expired, to be sent to the seventh hall.

"Persons guilty of the above crimes, if they will abstain from animal food on the third day of the eighth moon, and will on the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth of the fifth moon, the third of the eighth moon, and the tenth of the tenth moon, not quarrel with any person, shall escape all the torments of hell."

This proclamation is supplemented as follows: "A new decree. The unrepentant of the above crimes shall first suffer for five years in the great hell, and then three years in the hell for flaying. At the expiration of this period they are to be passed to the seventh hall. The souls of those who live in lonely places and rob and murder travellers, of innkeepers who put poison in food to injure their guests, of banditti, and those who assault women — when they arrive in this hall shall be cut in halves and afterwards be sent to the great hell and suffer for sixteen years, and then five years in each of the sixteen hells; at the expiration of this period they shall go the boundless hell and pass through fifteen hundred various calamities, and after this be born as animals."

The translator remarks: "When an idol of any value is finished, there is the ceremony of giving it a soul in order to make it have life, *i. e.* power to be efficacious; the soul is placed in a small box or hole between the shoulders. I once extracted a soul; there were several bits of metal to represent the heart, liver, and lungs, the bones of a sparrow and mouse, a bag of cereals, some silk threads, and a paper giving an account of the putting in of the soul. In valuable idols gold and silver are put in, and then the idols are well guarded."